

IN THE CLAIMS:

The status of each claim that has been introduced in the above-referenced application is identified in the ensuing listing of the claims. This listing of the claims replaces all previously submitted claims listings.

1-11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently amended) An apparatus for forcing a die ~~through~~ into a sheet of material, comprising:
a first member including:
an uninterrupted, planar die receiving surface; and
a die retaining element associated with said die receiving surface, said die retaining element being configured to secure a planar surface of a substantially planar die to said die receiving surface;
a second member including:
an uninterrupted, planar sheet supporting surface oriented to oppose said die receiving surface; and
handles associated with said first and second members so as to facilitate movement of at least one member of said first and second members toward the other of said first and second members.

13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said die retaining element is magnetic.

14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said die retaining element mechanically secures a substantially planar die to said die receiving surface.

15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said second member includes a cushioning element that forms at least a portion of said substantially planar sheet supporting surface.

16. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said ~~biasing element~~ handles are configured to be held by and operated with a hand of a user.

17-23. (Canceled)

24. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein said die receiving surface is unbounded.

25. (Currently amended) An apparatus for forcing a die ~~through~~ into a sheet of material, comprising:
a first member including:
an unbounded die receiving surface configured to completely support a planar back side of a substantially planar die; and
a die retaining element associated with said die receiving surface, said die retaining element configured to ~~receive a~~ secure the planar back side of the substantially planar die to said die receiving surface;
a second member including:
a substantially planar sheet supporting surface oriented to oppose said die receiving surface; and
handles associated with said first and second members so as to facilitate movement of at least one member of said first and second members toward the other of said first and second members.

26. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the die retaining element comprises at least one of a magnetic and a magnetically-attractable material.

27. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 26, wherein said die receiving surface is uninterrupted and planar.

28. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 27, wherein said substantially planar sheet supporting surface is uninterrupted.

29. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 25, wherein said second member includes a cushioning element that forms at least a portion of said substantially planar sheet supporting surface.

30. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 25, wherein said ~~biasing element~~ handles are configured to be held by and operated with a hand of a user.

31. (Currently amended) An apparatus for forcing a die ~~through~~ into a sheet of material, comprising:

a first member including:

an uninterrupted, planar die receiving surface; and

a die retaining element associated with said die receiving surface, said die retaining element configured to secure a substantially planar die to said die receiving surface;

a second member including:

a sheet supporting surface oriented to oppose said die receiving surface; and

handles associated with said first and second members so as to facilitate movement of ~~at least one member both~~ of said first and second members toward ~~the each other of said first and second members.~~ the each other of said first and second members.

32. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 31, wherein said die receiving surface is configured to receive and completely support an uninterrupted, planar surface of the substantially planar die.

33. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 31, wherein said die receiving surface is unbounded.

34. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 31, wherein said sheet supporting surface is uninterrupted and planar.

35. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 31, wherein the die retaining element comprises at least one of a magnetic and a magnetically-attractable material.

36. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 31, wherein said second member includes a cushioning element that forms at least a portion of said sheet supporting surface.

37. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 31, wherein said ~~biasing element~~ ishandles are configured to be held by and operated with a hand of a user.